The Beginning of the End

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The Beginning of the End

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Brief summary: In a final battle between the royalty of Crystal Tokyo and the evil of the Negamoon, the Circle of Life is revealed.

Rating: PG-13 due to language and content

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> <p>The Beginning of the End**

Crystal Tokyo

With the sun sitting high in the blue and cloudless sky, Crystal Tokyo glittered beautifully, sending peace and happiness into the hearts of all. Truly, all of the people of the Earth were happy under the rule of their King and Neo-Queen, relishing in the peace that they had enjoyed for the last five years... ever since the attack of the Negamoon family that had almost cost them the life of their

beloved queen -- their own angel given to them by heaven; or the moon, in this case.

Some of the people of the Earth were righteously angry at all of the pain and fighting that marked their young queen's life. Many years ago she had almost given her own life when she used most of her power to awaken the Earth from a death-like sleep that they had brought upon themselves. Then, she had used her powers once again to battle beside her husband and eight scouts in order to banish the negative energy from the land, which in turn had brought upon this last attack... the attack that had almost cost them too much. Without their queen, all hope would be lost. Neo-Queen Serenity was loved by all and all would gladly give their life for their queen.. especially her scouts, her eternal love and husband, and her own cherished daughter and their tiny princess. Unfortunately, the world over knew that their queen would gladly do the same for each of them, a sacrifice none ever wanted her to make.

"Mommy, when do I get to go back to Tokyo?" Reenie asked with her wide red eyes.

At her daughter's question, Neo-Queen Serenity turned away from the beautiful red rose that she had been tending in the palace gardens. "Why, Reenie," she said, her serene smile lighting up her face as her large blue eyes twinkled down at her small daughter, now ten, with the sun causing her long satin hair to sparkle like the sun itself, "it's been no more than a few months since your last visit."

Sighing, Reenie nodded her head absently as she sat on a single bench to the side of her mother, Diana purring contentedly on her lap. "I know, Mommy," Reenie answered as she met her bright blue eyes. "But I miss Serena, Darien, and the Scouts," Reenie answered, her small eyes filling with tears. "I even miss Sammy!"

Smiling gently, Serenity crossed the space between them and sat beside her daughter, the material of her soft dress hugging her shapely form. "I can promise you that they all miss you as well -- especially Serena."

"Do you think so?" Reenie asked with wide eyes, sometimes forgetting that Serena and her Mommy were one and the same.

"Have I ever lied to you before?" Serenity asked with a wide smile as Reenie quickly wrapped her arms around her mother's tiny waist and buried her head against her mother's bosom. Sighing, Serenity wrapped her arms around her daughter as the tears pooled unseen in her eyes. It had been so hard for her to send Reenie back this time, knowing what was in store for her daughter... knowing that her baby's heart crystal would be taken and that her life would hang in the balance. It was only because of her love, Endymion, that she was able to send her daughter back to fulfill her destiny. His plea to trust in herself of the past had been simple -- but that faith was hard to give. She remembered how weak she had been at that time, but the Scouts and Endymion's words convinced her in the end: Serena has never let us down in the past and you never will. Even Raye had agreed.

"No, you would never lie, Mommy," Reenie finally answered as she pulled away, Diana gasping for breath after her poor feline body had

almost been crushed between mother and daughter. By now, Serenity's eyes were clear and bright once more, the Neo-Queen determined to ensure that the beautiful day wasn't destroyed by sadness. "So, may I ask Puu to take me back for a short visit?" Reenie asked with hopeful eyes.

"I don't think so, Reenie," Serenity replied slowly, a small frown playing at her lips.

Frowning herself, Reenie quickly shook her head in confusion as she placed Diana on the ground. A frown was so rarely seen on her mother's face that it quickly disturbed the small princess. "Why not?"

"Because I don't remember you ever visiting again," Serenity answered as a faraway look entered her troubled blue eyes. "I remember being so sad and missing you so much."

"Well, maybe you won't remember until it's time like the first time," Reenie suggested, a cold knot, which was so out of place on the beautiful day, forming in the pit of her stomach.

"That worries me as well," Serenity murmured as she watched Diana disappear in the direction of the palace. "Either you never were sent back or else something will happen dealing with the past that directly affects Crystal Tokyo..."

"Huh?" Reenie asked in confusion, her ten year old mind unable to grasp the concept that her mommy was presenting.

"How could we have not thought of this before?" Serenity asked as a chilly coldness entered her flesh. "Why did Sailor Mercury not even think of it?" Serenity asked aloud as a sudden commotion was heard elsewhere in the gardens. Surprised and instantly alert, Serenity hurried to her feet and pushed her daughter instinctively behind her. A moment later, Sailor Venus rushed into the garden. "Venus, what's wrong?" Serenity asked quickly, her fear deepening.

"My Queen, we're under attack!" Venus gasped as she led the way back to the palace. "The King and the Scouts are already gathered in the Control Room with the Guardians!"

"The Outer Scouts?" Serenity gasped as she ran, Reenie's hand grasped tightly in her own.

"Have already been summoned," Venus puffed as they neared the room, "and Sailor Pluto arrived right before the attack."

At Venus's words, Serenity halted outside the door, her face growing pale. She knew that only the gravest of situations would draw the Guardian of Time from the gates. Looking down, she saw Reenie looking up at her with fear filled eyes -- she too was aware of this fact. Steeling her shoulders, Serenity pushed aside all thoughts of fear and panic as she stepped within the control room, Reenie and Venus right behind her. Instantly, she was surrounded by a mass of confused and panicked voices. Quickly, her eyes lit upon her husband's tall form as he worked at the console, her Inner and Outer Scouts spread around him. Then, as her presence became known, silence reigned as she stepped forward, Reenie still firmly clutching her hand.

Turning, she rested her large blue eyes on the four Outer Scouts who resided in one corner, their ages now all appearing to be the same. Even Saturn, who was but a baby in Tokyo, had caught up to the rest when they stopped aging. All of the Scouts now stood tall and willowy, their natural beauty enhanced in their lithe forms. They were all now frozen at Sailor Pluto's age -- which promised to make life interesting as Reenie grew closer to their own age appearance. "Thank you all for coming so quickly," she murmured, her gaze kind as she welcomed the four and made them immediately feel at ease.

"My Queen," Mercury quickly broke in with an apologetic smile, her face instantly turning serious, "I'm afraid that the Negamoon is attacking again."

At the group's sigh of relief, the Neo-Queen quickly shook her head as she drew Reenie closer to her side. They all knew how tough the last battle had been -- they had almost lost their beloved queen in that battle. If it were not for Princess Reenie and their past selves, they wouldn't be there today. But what they were all assuming was that because they had defeated them before, they could easily do so again. The Queen wasn't so assured. But as she looked down into Reenie's fear-filled eyes, Serenity knew one thing for certain -- Wicked Lady would never control her baby again. Sighing, she saw that Mercury shared her anxiety. "Please explain, my friend."

Nodding her head, Mercury quickly took the King's place at the console as he stepped beside his wife, his arm automatically wrapping around her slim waist as Reenie moved to his other side. "We had no warning of the attack," Mercury began as Sailor Neptune moved curiously beside her, "for they teleported in."

"How many?" Artemis asked from beside Luna and Diana.

Grimacing, Mercury twisted a knob which revealed about twenty square boxes within the main screen, all showing the massive black crystal ships from before, all attacking various locations in the world. Already the destruction was unimaginable and the loss of life was substantial. With sad eyes, she watched as Serenity's large blue eyes filled with tears at the horrific sight. "There are about twenty times more attack ships than last time that have covered the entire Earth with their destruction. To make matters worse," she continued, her voice bleak, "there's an even greater number of ground troops -- all crystal monsters that have traces of human energy."

"Oh God," Luna whispered quietly in the awed silence, "they've changed their own people into monsters." Instantly, Diana rubbed against her mother's side as the Scouts turned as one to their King and Queen.

"Someone with more power has taken over Prince Diamond's cause," Serenity murmured, her thoughts drifting back to her exploits with the Prince when she was no more than Sailor Moon. Even then she had known that her heart belonged to one man, as it would for eternity.

Obviously, Endymion was remembering the same thing as he hugged his wife closer to him, his eyes turning a cold blue. Memories of his past self saving his young love and of when Serenity, his current love had been frozen in sleep warred within him.

"Well, Meatball Head," Mars quickly broke in, earning an astonished and annoyed glare from all gathered, "are we going to go and save our planet or just sit around and reminisce about when you were a ditz?"

Shaking her head, Neo-Queen Serenity met Sailor Mars' flippant gaze. "Sailor Mars is right," she finally stated as she turned to her scouts and advisors. "We must protect our people no matter the cost."

Sighing, King Endymion nodded his head in agreement at his love's words. "The enemy is strong and we must all fight to our fullest, holding back nothing."

At her daddy's strong words, Reenie quickly turned and tugged gently on the hem of her mommy's beautiful white dress. Instantly, her mommy turned her kind blue eyes down upon her. "Mommy, me too?" she asked, her eyes wide with hope at the thought of helping.

"Yes, Reenie, we will need everyone's help to fight in this battle," Serenity replied with a kind smile, hiding her growing fear and dread easily. In all honesty, she wanted her small daughter no where near the fighting. Then again, she knew that she couldn't shelter her daughter forever, and that the girl was becoming a strong fighter -- they truly needed all the help that they could get.

"I'll help a lot!" Reenie quickly assured, her red eyes twinkling. "I've been training with Sailor Moon and I'm really good now!"

Sailor Mars couldn't help the groan that escaped her lips, much to the others' dismay. "Just don't run screaming the other way like Sailor Moon always did," she muttered sarcastically.

Mother and daughter both easily ignored the barb, both far too used to Sailor Mars' sarcastic remarks and biting comments. "I know that you will do wonderful, Reenie," Serenity murmured as she knelt down and enveloped her daughter in a large hug. "Just stay by my side."

Smiling, Reenie quickly nodded in agreement before lifting one hand in the air. "Moon Prism Power!" she called out as the power spread out from the small crystal brooch she wore on her dress, so much like Sailor Moon's from the past. Instantly, she was swathed in bright light, ribbons and feathers as her power from within was amplified by the brooch. True, it was no Imperium Silver Crystal, having returned that to its rightful owner after her first trip to Tokyo, but it served its purpose well, as it did for Sailor Moon before she had use of the crystal. Finally, when the light dissipated, Sailor Crescent Moon stood in Reenie's place. "Let's go kick some Nega-butt!" she cried out as she pumped her tiny fist in the air.

Instantly all eyes turned to Sailor Jupiter as her face grew red in embarrassment. "Maybe she picked up a little too much from our past selves," she murmured weakly with a wry grin.

Hiding her own smile, Neo-Queen Serenity quickly turned her attention back to the tall, blue-haired woman. "Mercury, can you pinpoint where the negative energy is most focused?"

"The only place not under attack is Crystal Tokyo," Mercury murmured with a small frown, "but it seems that the highest energy reading is coming from what used to be known as Washington D.C. in the United States."

"Why there and not here?" Sailor Saturn asked slowly, her large, dark eyes thoughtful as a small frown appeared on her pale face. Even fully grown, the youngest of the Sailor Scouts still appeared physically weak -- quite contrary to the truth.

"Most likely because they think we draw our energy from Crystal Tokyo," King Endymion answered logically.

"All of our past battles have always been fought here in Tokyo," Sailor Uranus added, nodding her blond head thoughtfully. "They have no reason to think otherwise."

"Well then, let's give them a reason!" Venus replied with a hard smile.

Nodding her head, Serenity indicated for everyone to gather round. "We shall take the fight to them," she said before turning her large blue eyes to her loyal advisors and guardians. "Luna, you, Artemis, and Diana shall stay here and organize the guards to protect the palace and Crystal Tokyo. Once we are away, I am certain that the attack will move here."

At the cats' nod of determined agreement, Sailor Crescent Moon quickly rushed forward and scooped up the small gray kitten into her arms, her bell tinkling loudly. "I love you Diana," she whispered as she hugged the kitten to her.

"I love you too, Reenie," Diana whispered back as she nuzzled her furry head against her princess's soft cheek. "Please be careful."

"Don't worry, I'll be with my mommy and daddy," Sailor Crescent Moon whispered as she gently placed the kitten beside her own mommy and daddy and scuttled back to her parents' side.

"Sailor Teleport?" Sailor Pluto asked, speaking for the first time.

"You know it," Serenity replied with a smile as the scouts stepped forward to form a circle around the royal family. Directly across from her stood the Guardian of Time as she stared at her with shielded eyes. Neo-Queen Serenity wanted nothing more than to ask Pluto what was going to happen and why she felt such an intense anxiety over this battle, but she dared not. The Queen and the others had given up long ago on trying to get the Scout to divulge her secrets of the future and instead respected her silence. To Pluto's left stood Sailor Venus, Sailor Neptune, Sailor Mars, Sailor Uranus, Sailor Jupiter, Sailor Saturn, and with Sailor Mercury closing the circle to Pluto's right.

Suddenly, Sailor Crescent Moon turned and looked up at her daddy with serious eyes. "I wish that Sailor Moon was here to help," she whispered. "Even though Serena can be a pain, she _always_ tries until she wins."

At his daughter's words, Endymion turned to see that Serenity had overheard and had tears of happiness in her eyes. Smiling to himself, the King quickly hunkered down and took Crescent Moon's hands into his own. "Reenie, as far as we're all concerned, you _are_ Sailor Moon -- the only one that we're going to need."

Sighing, Sailor Crescent Moon smiled slightly before a small frown covered her features. "But Sailor Moon is really powerful..."

Shaking his head, his black hair ruffling gently, Endymion squeezed his daughter's hand one more time as he stood tall once again. "Just remember that your mother is stronger as Neo-Queen Serenity, the final transformation, who can access the full power of the crystal, just as I'm more powerful as King Endymion than as Tuxedo Mask."

At her daddy's words, Sailor Crescent Moon thought quietly for a second before her face brightened. "I'd rather have you and Mommy with me then, instead of Darien and Serena."

Shaking her head at her daughter's words, Serenity turned her eyes to her friends. "Scouts, teleport!" she commanded, her regal voice ringing in the large room.

As one the Scouts nodded before turning to Sailor Pluto to start. Sighing, Pluto steeled her emotions at what she knew was to come as she raised her time staff in the air. "Pluto Planet Power!" she yelled, which was quickly followed by a stretched out hand and the cries of the others.

"Venus Planet Power!"
> "Neptune Planet Power!"
 "Mars Planet Power!"
> "Uranus Planet Power!"
 "Jupiter Planet Power!"
> "Saturn Planet Power!"
 "Mercury Planet Power!"
> "Crescent Moon Planet Power!" <p>

"Imperium Silver Crystal Moon Planet Power!" Neo-Queen Serenity added as she called upon the well of magic hidden deep within herself.

"Sailor Transport!" the group yelled as one as the colors of their planets swirled around them all before joining into one. A second later, the group of eleven warriors disappeared.

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When the group finally reappeared at their chosen destination, they instantly knew that they were on a battle field. All of the sturdy buildings that had once made up the beautiful city, as well as the ancient monuments, had been leveled within the first few minutes as the bodies of the city's inhabitants were strewn throughout the rubble. Also, because of the time difference, the bright moon of the night lit their way instead of the sunshine that they had left behind in their home. Shocked, the group didn't even wait for the command from their King and Queen as they dove into battle.

As one group, they spread out and worked to destroy the hundreds to

thousands of crystal monsters that attacked from all sides. At the same time they directed part of their attack to the ships above, destroying the enemy from all angles. While the nine scouts used their every attack in the book, King Endymion used his sword and powerful blasts that seared forth from his very hands to battle. All in all, every attack was helpful as the enemy fell, Neo-Queen Serenity taking out many at a time with the crystal -- all were giving everything they had in this fight, determined not to fail their planet or their Queen.

Suddenly, as the monsters before her fell into dust, Neo-Queen Serenity felt prickles run down her spine as she became certain that she was being watched. With one final blast she quickly destroyed all the monsters in her immediate area and then turned quickly, her large blue eyes scanning the sky. Instantly they alighted upon the only living human she had seen in the city beside those that had traveled with her -- and he wore the black upside down crescent mark of the Negamoon -- the opposite of what was now permanently displayed on her own forehead. The man was as handsome as he was dark, tall with fine brown hair shielding his stormy gray eyes -- eyes that were locked upon her.

"You have no chance, Neo-Queen Serenity," he called out from where he floated in the dark sky, his eyes burning with hatred and desire -- not for her light and goodness as Diamond, but for her perfect body. "For you are fighting the entire Dark Moon now."

"Who are you?" Neo-Queen Serenity asked, her large blue eyes filled with determination.

"I am Opallo, advisor to the late Prince Diamond, now commander and ruler of the Negamoon," he cried out, his voice filled with disgusting pride.

"Why must we always fight?" Serenity called out, trying to find the heart that she knew must be in the man somewhere. "Why can we not live together in peace? If you will only just accept the cleansing of the crystal..."

"Because evil will always prevail," was Opallo's simple reply, his dark eyes glittering.

"We will never stop fighting," Serenity countered, her eyes sad.

"Really?" Opallo asked simply as he turned and stared at something purposefully to her right.

With the knot tightening once more in her stomach, Neo-Queen Serenity turned slowly in the indicated direction. Instantly, she gasped as she watched a swarm of crystal monsters bear in on her husband. "**NO!!**" she screamed as the world began moving in slow motion. Just as she began to run forward, she released massive amounts of energy that destroyed hundreds of the crystal monsters that lined her path. But at that exact moment, King Endymion was overwhelmed by the monsters as a single crystal shard was stabbed through his back, fatally wounding him in one strike.

"DARIEN!!** _NOOOOOOOOOOO!!!_**" Serenity screamed in horror as the fighting stopped all around her as the monsters looked on in

curiosity, the Scouts in horror. When she reached her husband's side, she slowly knelt there, gently cradling his head in her lap. "Darien, please don't leave me," Serenity sobbed as the tears streaked down her face.

Fate was so cruel to her. How many times in the past had she gone through this same scene? Sobbing beside her love's side, his wounds mortal? But this time... this time was so much worse. On the Moon, their love had been refreshing and new. In Tokyo, it had been yet another new love, just in the beginning, with vague memories of the past to strengthen it. But now... now she had the love of a marriage that had spanned over a thousand years pressing down on her, smothering her beneath its weight.

"Daddy, no," Sailor Crescent Moon sobbed as she knelt beside her mother, quickly clutching his large gloved hand in her own.

Wincing against the blinding pain, Endymion glanced up at the two that were the most important in his life through blurry eyes. They both looked like angels come down to greet him with their large eyes that sparkled with tears and the large moon glinting off of their blond and pink hair behind them. So alike, his angels were. "I.. I will always love you both," he murmured, his voice weak. "Our love.. is eternal... I will see you.... both..... again....."

And with his last words spoken, Endymion breathed his final breath. Shaking, both mother and daughter felt him go limp in their arms and knew the truth. "No, Daddy no," Crescent Moon sobbed in denial as Serenity clutched desperately at her beloved, her soft whimpers of "Darien" breaking the Scouts' hearts further.

And then as one, the truth hit both Queen and Princess like a blow that destroyed both of their hearts. "**_NOOOOOOO!!!!_**" they both screamed, tears pouring down their cheeks as they tilted their heads back to scream at the very moon itself. And then, as their anguished screams filled the night sky, two twin beams of light shot forth from their identical golden crescent marks that glowed on their foreheads and lit up the heavens above, letting the world know the devastating truth.

"The King is dead," Mercury murmured, a single tear streaking down her face.

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"Darien," Sailor Mars whispered sadly as silent tears tracked down her face. Darien was dead and now she would finally have to say goodbye. As she forced the sobs to stay hidden, Mars furiously scrubbed the tears from her cheeks as the moon glinted off of her raven locks.

And she mourned.

She mourned the prince she had loved from afar on the Moon, the handsome college student she had for a time and then gave up for her princess in Tokyo, and the king she had never stopped loving. And it was all for her 'princess.'

Growling softly, Mars glared bitterly at the Queen's back, now sobbing brokenly over her husband's body. The ditzy meatball head

never deserved Darien, never. All she would do was scream and run in the other direction when faced with danger, always leaving them to save her whining butt. Serena didn't deserve Darien _or_ Reenie. It should have been her that married her prince and had Reenie. If she had been Queen, Darien wouldn't be dead now. He wouldn't be dead now!

Suddenly, a searing pain tore through her tender stomach. Screaming out, Sailor Mars looked down and saw a red fire piercing through her middle. Gasping, she looked up to face a hideous crystal monster standing before her, his hand still smoking from the mortal blast he had unleashed upon her.

It had taken advantage of her distraction.

As the agony pulsed through her and her dark red blood stained her red skirt, Mars fell to her knees. Looking up once more, she glared at the monster. She would not go without a fight. Even as her life was drained from her ruined body, Mars summoned her deepest power. "I call upon.. the power of Mars," she gasped, ignoring the pain as she focused with all of her might. "Mars Fire Annihilation!" she cried out as the fire spread out from around her, destroying everything within her circular radius.

Then, her power spent, Sailor Mars tumbled to the hard ground, a strangled cry leaving her lips. She was dying and she knew it. Everything hurt so much and all she wanted to do was sleep. And then her eyes locked on Serenity's large, sad blue eyes. She still knelt beside her fallen husband, but her teary eyes rested on Sailor Mars. It was then that the dying scout realized that the tears in Serenity's eyes were for her. Amazed, Mars could do no more than blink her eyes in surprise. After the death of her husband, Serenity could still cry for her? After all the mean and cruel things she had done?

Instantly, her mind flashed to the horrible thoughts she had about her queen, and then even further back. She had _always_ been mean and cruel to her sensitive princess. True, her attacks on Serena had lessened as they got older, but they never stopped. She would taunt and belittle the delicate girl until she burst into tears, her good moods ruined and her self-esteem shattered. She was probably the most responsible out of everyone for any unhappiness Serena had ever felt. Yet, throughout it all, Serena had always cared.

And with that thought, Raye Hino finally understood the thing that everyone else had always known: Serena was special. Princess Serenity, Serena Tsukino, Sailor Moon, Neo-Queen Serenity... all of her different identities were the same because she was always the same. She had the purest heart of all and cared for all others so much that she shined, so much that everyone would forever come before her. She finally understood.

"I.. I will always serve... and protect you," Sailor Mars whispered as her eyes fluttered shut for the last time, knowing that her queen heard her words, "my princess.... my queen..... my friend..." With those words a great warrior, priestess, and friend died.

The first of the Sailor Scouts had fallen.

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"**_NO!!_**" Sailor Venus and Jupiter cried as one as they looked at their friend in horror. "Sailor Mars..."

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As the silent tears streaked Neo-Queen Serenity's face, she slowly climbed to her feet and looked around the battle field with haunted eyes. Everywhere she looked she saw death and destruction as her scouts battled the crystal monsters and as her own daughter, Sailor Crescent Moon, went on a murderous rampage. Shaking her head, Serenity allowed the tears to drip down unnoticed as her large blue eyes grew wide.

"There's too much death," she whispered as her gaze drifted over the bodies of her husband and friend, and then to the ashes of the destroyed monsters. "There can't be any more death," she whispered, tears in her eyes as compassion swept through her. "No one deserves death," she murmured as she lifted the crystal before and above her.

"You all will be healed," she promised, knowing that what she was about to do would take more energy and time, but not caring. The time for death was over. "Moon Crystal Healing Activation!"

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Alerted by the Queen's words, Sailor Uranus quickly turned and watched as Neo-Queen Serenity began healing the crystal monsters, the unconscious humans falling to the ground. "What on Earth is she doing?" Uranus hissed, her eyes wide in disbelief as she turned to the Scout who was fighting beside her.

"Healing the crystal monsters," Sailor Jupiter grunted as she disposed of her opponent. "Jupiter Oak Evolution!"

"Why?!" Uranus hissed as she destroyed another monster.

At this, Jupiter paused in her fighting and faced her friend. "Because that's who she is. Love," she answered seriously as she brushed a stray strand of fine brown hair from her face.

"Even the enemy?"

"Serenity will allow no one to suffer except for herself," Jupiter murmured, her eyes locking on her queen and her unprotected back. Shaking her head, she quickly left the blond sailor's side and began making her way towards her queen. And then she was behind Serenity and fighting for all she was worth, keeping the only hope for their future alive.

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Seeing this, Sailor Neptune shook her head, her blue-green hair flying around her shoulders. "Deep Submerge Attack!" she cried, quickly disposing of an advancing crystal monster. "She truly is the messiah of light," she murmured as she turned away. This time, her eyes lit upon Sailor Uranus' fighting form, her partner and best friend in the world. And then, her beautiful eyes narrowed as she saw a crystal monster advance unnoticed on her friend. Quickly, she began

running forward, her long masses of marine-blue hair flying behind her as a sharp explosion of light flew out of the monster and rocketed towards her friend. _I will always give my life for you, Haruka_, she thought as she threw herself before her friend. "Haruka!" she screamed as the cold light pierced her heart.

"Michiru!" Uranus yelled out, a single tear dripping down her cheek as she caught her friend, Neptune's heart already silent. "**_NO!!_**" she cried out in furious anger as she slowly stood, laying Neptune's body before her, her eyes blank. "I will not be without you!" she cried. "I call upon the power of Uranus! World Shaking Attack!" she bellowed, the power leaping from her hands as it instantly vaporized herself, Neptune's body, and dozens of monsters that surrounded them.

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As two more tears dripped down, Neo-Queen Serenity closed her eyes painfully. "I am so sorry Michiru and Haruka."

And then, as though floating on the cool night breeze, the voices of her fallen friends came to her, giving her strength. "For our Queen and for each other."

Nodding, Serenity continued to heal the enemy.

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Biting back her tears, Mercury continued to work furiously at her computer while Venus covered her, brushing her short blue hair out of her eyes. "Raye was not supposed to die! None of us are supposed to die," she murmured as she worked, desperately searching for a way to enhance the power of their attacks. "Just hang on, Venus!" Mercury called out.

"Working on it!" was Venus's grunted reply as she ducked one of the crystal monsters, her golden hair swirling around her. "Venus Crescent Beam Smash!" she called out, dusting the offensive monster. Turning, she watched as another one advanced. "Don't you ever learn?!" she cried, fighting the tears that threatened her at the loss of her friends. Once again she called on her powers. "Venus Love Chain Encircle!" she ordered, sending her attack flying.

Suddenly though, the crystal monster caught the chain and threw it back at the stunned Scout. As her own chain wrapped tightly around her, one end still clasped tightly in the creature's hand, Venus finally broke out of her shocked stupor. "Hey! You can't do that!" she yelled, her shout cut short as the creature sent a wave of electricity through the metal, electrocuting the Scout. "Aghhhh!!!"

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Alerted by Sailor Venus's screams of agony, Neo-Queen Serenity turned quickly and felt more tears fall. "I'm sorry Mina," she whispered as the breeze lifted around her, causing her twin tails of gold to swish around her satin form.

"We will live and die for you Serena, my queen, my princess and

friend," came Mina's ghostly reply.

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In shock, Mercury stared down at her friend's body, Mina's golden hair streaked with black as smoke slowly lifted from her chain. "No," Mercury began to murmur, her soft blue eyes misting with tears. Suddenly, her computer began to beep loudly as it finished compiling the information that she had fed it. Turning as though in a trance, Mercury quickly read the data, her expression becoming grim as she found Neo-Queen Serenity's sad blue eyes on her.

"I'm sorry, Serena," she whispered to the one who had always been her closest friend, somehow knowing that she heard her murmured words, "but this is the best way that I can help."

And then, as Serenity's eyes dropped shut and as her murmured words spoke to her heart, she knew that her queen understood. "I'm so sorry Amy."

"For you," was Mercury's murmured reply as she closed her eyes, tears dripping down, and searched deep within herself for the power hidden there. "I call upon the power of Mercury, the planet of knowledge and ice. Give me the strength to aid my Queen... my friend," she whispered as her eyes snapped open. She now knew that to do the most damage she needed to use all of her attacks at once... something that her body would be unable to handle. "For my friend!" she screamed again, her eyes blazing. "Mercury Bubbles Blast! Mercury Ice Bubbles Freeze! Mercury Ice Storm Blast! Mercury Shine Aqua Illusion! Mercury Aqua Rhapsody!!"

With a flash of bright light, everything within a fifty foot radius was hit with a freezing wave, killing everything in its path -- including Sailor Mercury.

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"**_NO!!_**" Sailor Jupiter screamed out, her heart breaking even further. "Mina... Amy..." she murmured, hard tears streaking down her face as a heavy realization settled on her shoulders: with their deaths she, Sailor Jupiter, was the last of the Inner Scouts, the Princess's court, and the final barrier between the enemy and her princess -- her queen.

Suddenly, she turned and watched through slitted eyes as a single man floated in the dark night sky. "You!" she hissed, instantly knowing that this was the person behind everything: the pain, the suffering, the death. "You will pay for this!" she yelled out at him as his dark eyes laughed down at her. "Jupiter Supreme Thunder Dragon!" she roared as the electricity flew from her fingers in the shape of a striking dragon.

But as Jupiter's attack drew near the man merely absorbed the strong current. Then, with a twisted smile at the horrified Scout, he quickly released the attack and directed it towards Neo-Queen Serenity's unprotected back.

"No, Serena!" Jupiter yelled in horror, knowing that her friend didn't see it coming. Without thinking, she quickly jumped forward and took her own blast for her queen.

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As Jupiter's screams echoed in the dark night, Serenity quickly swiveled and caught her friend as she tumbled against her. Struggling against the taller woman's weight, Serenity lowered Jupiter to the ground. "Oh no, Lita!" Neo-Queen Serenity cried, the tears streaking down her face, seemingly of an endless supply. How could she continue to cry when so many tears had already fallen? How could she live without Darien and her friends? "I'm so sorry Lita," she murmured, her tears falling and washing away some of the soot that marred her friend's cheek.

"I failed you," Lita moaned, pain wracking her broken body.

"No," Serenity quickly whispered, a small ghost of a smile touching her lips. "You saved me."

At this, Jupiter weakly lifted her hand and moved as if to touch Serenity's smile. "That is what we fight for..." she murmured, her breath growing short, "so... that you will always.... brighten the world..... with your smile....."

Through glistening tears, Serenity placed a shaky hand forward and closed the unseeing brown eyes of the mighty Sailor Jupiter for the last time. Closing her eyes, she then weakly climbed to her feet and turned to where her daughter was fighting bravely, tears streaming down her young face. "Reenie," Serenity sobbed as she raised the crystal and began clearing a path to her daughter.

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Not noticing her mother's approach, Sailor Crescent Moon continued to call out her attacks. "Pink Sugar Heart Attack! Crescent Moon Twinkle Yell! Crescent Moon Tiara Magic!" she cried out in between sobs for all that she had lost this night. She knew that her daddy, as well as her friends and role models, were all dead. Things would never be the same again. The only ones that remained to fight were just her, her mommy, Sailor Saturn, and Puu. The others were gone forever... her daddy was dead.

At this thought, another sob wracked Sailor Crescent Moon's small body. Never again would her daddy hug her, comfort her when she was scared, carry her on his shoulders, keep her safe, or tell her stories of Sailor Moon, her mommy in the past, before bed. Her daddy was dead.

Suddenly, Sailor Crescent Moon's red eyes widened in terror as the crystal monsters surged around her. "Mommy! **_HELP ME!!!_**"

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Panicked by her daughter's screams of terror, Serenity began screaming herself as she ran as fast as she could, blasting the crystal monsters as she went. Then, her eyes widened in horror as a single monster raised a crystal shard above its head and then drove it into Sailor Crescent Moon's tiny back -- mortally wounding her in the same way that her father had been killed.

"**_NNNOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!_**" Serenity screamed as she finally got within range and annihilated the monsters that surrounded her baby. "Reenie!" she sobbed as she knelt beside her small daughter, her white sailor fuku blossoming a dark red color, instantly covering the pretty pink her daughter so loved. Then, she felt Saturn and Pluto by her side as the two combined strength to form a shield of sorts around mother and daughter -- but Serenity didn't care. All that mattered to her in the world now was the pink-haired little girl who she cradled in her lap. "No, not you too! Please, not you!!" Serenity gasped, clutching her daughter to her.

"I love you, Mommy," Reenie whispered as she lost her transformation, her sailor fuku disappearing even as the wound remained.

Easily recognizing words of goodbye when they came, Serenity felt what was left of her heart crumble to dust only to be blown away on the cool night wind. "No..." Serenity moaned, her face awash in wet tears. She couldn't lose her baby on top of everyone else. "Small Lady, you will _not_ die on me!" she suddenly ordered, her voice firm even as a sob wracked her thin form. "Do you hear me?!" she cried, her voice cracking as she hugged Reenie tightly against her body, her bright blue eyes boring into her daughter's soft red.

Smiling weakly through a haze of pain that her small body had never before known, Reenie recognized the tone and words as something that she was never able to deny. This time, she had no choice in the matter. "I'm... sorry Mommy," Reenie whispered as her tiny eyes fluttered shut for the last time.

"No! Reenie, **NO!!**" Serenity screamed in horror as she shook her daughter, gently at first, and then harder and harder as she got no response. Mutely, she could hear Saturn crying quietly beside her even as she and Pluto called out their attacks: "Silence Glaive Surprise! World Shaking Attack!"

"No," Serenity whispered as she stared down at her daughter's unmoving body, the bright red stain on the front of her blue dress a testament to her death. "**_NNNNOOOOOOOOO!!!!_**" Serenity screamed as a powerful moonbeam shot out from her crescent mark and into the dark night sky for a second time that night. But this time, the beam was even more powerful as the agony she felt at the deaths of all those she loved poured forth.

Sensing this, a look of sheer panic covered Pluto's wise face, completely masking the immense grief she felt at the death of their young princess. "Hotaru!" she quickly called out, causing the young woman to turn quickly and regard her with large, dark eyes. "Shield yourself!" she ordered even as the Queen's powerful moon beam began to spread out from her, destroying everything in its path with its light.

Nodding her head, Saturn quickly did as ordered, and barely in time as the moonbeam swept over her, nearly crushing her beneath its weight. When it finally dissipated, Saturn let down her shield with a weary sigh. It was good, in a way, that only the most powerful of them remained, for she was certain that the rest would have been destroyed by the blast. But in its wake, Saturn felt her heart break further as she watched her queen sob brokenly over her daughter's body, her hands clenching the soft blue material of Reenie's dress in a futile gesture to hang on.

With tears pooling in her eyes once more, the youngest of the Scouts stepped forward and lay her soft hand on the Queen's shoulder. Turning, she saw that silent tears dripped down Pluto's face and her heart instantly went out to the Guardian of Time. Pluto had to have known that this was to happen all along, yet lived with the knowledge that she was powerless and forbidden to stop it. How could they go on with all they had lost? The humans would always need a Princess of the Moon to protect them, but not even Neo-Queen Serenity could live forever. What would they do without an heir?

With all her being, Sailor Saturn wanted to detransform and to use her healing powers as Hotaru on the small girl, but she knew her limits. She couldn't bring back the dead nor heal a wound so grievous. She was powerless.

Suddenly, a loud booming laugh that radiated evil joined Neo-Queen Serenity's wracking sobs. Surprised, she looked up to see Opallo floating overhead, a careless smirk on his face. With flashing eyes, Serenity climbed to her feet and glared at the man. "I know what must be done now," she murmured, her words directed at Pluto as she regarded her with solemn eyes.

Overhearing the Neo-Queen's quiet words, Opallo raised an eyebrow skeptically. "And what would that be?" he asked, a large smile growing on his face. "Admit it! You have nothing left!... You're mine now," he murmured, his eyes glittering dangerously as the pretty dark-haired soldier stepped protectively towards her queen.

Turning, Neo-Queen Serenity leveled her large blue eyes on the man, all tears dried as her anger was replaced by a great sadness. "Evil will never win," she murmured, her heart heavy, "but it will always survive, for it is evil that keeps us good."

While Opallo pondered her words and what it meant for him, Pluto felt her queen begin to power up. "Saturn, put up your shield!" Pluto warned even as Saturn had begun to warn her of the same thing.

"I will see you again when the circle comes to completion!" Serenity called out as she lifted the Imperium Silver Crystal above and before her. "Imperium Silver Crystal Moon Healing Activation!" she called out as a blinding white light flew forth from the crystal and encompassed everything. This time, she didn't just rely on the crystal, but instead poured her entire being into the crystal, surrendering herself to it and allowing the crystal to use her as much as she used it. "Heal," she whispered as the light encircled the Earth, entrapping all negative energy into the crystal.

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"No! Neo-Queen Serenity!" Saturn cried as the light disappeared within the crystal and as the queen fell to the ground, heaped over Reenie's body as her long golden hair mixed with the dead girl's pink tresses. Sobbing, Saturn knelt beside her queen and gently touched her pale cheek. "No," she whispered. How could they lose the light of their queen after everyone else? Her bright life ended to destroy the darkness?

"No," Pluto murmured sadly as she placed a gentle hand on Saturn's

shaking shoulder. "Neo-Queen Serenity has much else to do before the final darkness can claim her," she continued as if hearing Saturn's anguished thoughts. "Come," she said, pulling the woman to her feet, "let us bring her back to Crystal Tokyo so that she may rest."

"But... what of the others?" Saturn asked with shadowed eyes as she looked at the bloody and charred bodies of the Scouts and the Royal family that lay littered throughout the battle field.

Sighing, Pluto gently closed her eyes against the fresh memories that threatened to overwhelm her... Reenie.... "We take them with..."

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Groaning, Princess Serenity slowly lifted a small hand and pressed it against her spinning head, her blond hair trailing down around her in two separate tails with two small pearl clips holding them in place. Shaking her head, she then lifted her eyes and looked into the warm blue eyes of Queen Serenity. "Mother," she said warmly as she quickly stood and hugged her tightly, their purple and golden hair mixing together. Still, the happiness that she felt did nothing to wash away the anguish of her losses. Smiling softly, she stepped away to admire her young, fourteen year old body clothed in the soft white satin of her dress from the Moon. "Why, I haven't worn this in ages," she commented idly.

Smiling serenely down at her daughter, Queen Serenity stepped forward and took her small hands in her own. "I'm sorry, Serena, for your loss," she whispered, her blue eyes filling with sympathy. "Yet at the same time, I am so very proud of you," she murmured, tears filling her eyes as she drew her daughter into yet another tender embrace.

Smiling through her own tears, Princess Serenity hugged the Queen tightly to her small body. "Thank you, Mother," she whispered as Queen Serenity drew back once more, her large eyes turning serious.

"Do you remember why you're here?" she asked, knowing that their time was short.

Nodding her head sadly, Princess Serenity touched the crystal affixed to the bosom of her dress and transformed into Serena Tsukino, and then into Sailor Moon, and then Super Sailor Moon, and then Eternal Sailor Moon, before finally reaching the highest transformation. "The 'Circle of Life' is about to begin again," Neo-Queen Serenity answered sadly.

Smiling slightly, Queen Serenity took her daughter's hands in hers. "Are you ready to face the others?" she asked.

Instantly, Neo-Queen Serenity nodded her head as she took stock of her surroundings for the first time. All that she saw, though, was a thick mist that slowly began to lighten from around them, although it still lay so thick on bottom that their feet were obscured. Then, as Queen Serenity released her hand and stepped back a pace or two, outlines of the others began to come clear. As tears rushed to her

eyes, she easily recognized Darien in his green blazer, Reenie in her bright blue dress, and Raye, Michiru, Haruka, Mina, Amy, and Lita all dressed in their school uniforms and looking as they did in Tokyo.

"**_SERENA!!_**" Darien yelled as he caught sight of his eternal love.

"**_MOMMY!!_**" Reenie screamed just as loudly as her and her daddy rushed forward, her arms wrapping tightly around her waist even as her daddy began to kiss her mommy dizzyingly. As the tears streamed down her face, Reenie sobbed, covering her mommy's white dress in tears. She had been so sure that she would never see her again. Finally, when her younger daddy allowed her mommy to come up for breath, Reenie asked the question that all had been wondering. "Mommy, did you die too?" she asked with large, tear-filled eyes as the girls gathered around, too shocked to speak.

"No, she's still alive," Raye quickly replied with narrowed eyes as she stepped closer, inspecting her friend. "I can sense it, and also we've all reverted back to teenagers from Tokyo -- even Reenie looks five again, yet Serena is still Neo-Queen Serenity."

Gasping, the others quickly noticed that Raye was right. "Then what are you doing here?" Mina cried out, noticing the tears in Neo-Queen Serenity's large blue eyes for the first time... as well as the immense sadness.

Turning her eyes away from her friend, Amy noticed the woman standing behind her queen for the first time. "Queen Serenity!" she cried out as she quickly bowed low in respect, the others immediately following suit.

"I am hear to tell you of the Circle of Life," Neo-Queen Serenity said quietly, taking advantage of their distraction, "... and to say goodbye."

"Goodbye?!" Darien asked quickly in alarm, his head snapping up as he looked into the eyes of the woman he would always love -- the eyes that never changed. What was she saying of goodbye? How could she leave him when he had just found her again?

Instantly, Neo-Queen Serenity raised her hand to stop the protests she knew were coming. It was time to explain. "Crystal Tokyo is dead and my reign as the Neo-Queen has come to an end," she said sadly, her large blue eyes filled with compassion. Oddly enough, just now memories filled her head of when her own mother had told her and the others much the same thing at the end of the Silver Millennium. She also remembered her tearful pleadings with her mother not to leave her as Prince Endymion, the boy she had forsaken her young life for, had attempted to console her. Fighting back tears, Serenity met the disbelieving eyes of her loved ones. "The evil of the Negamoon has been sealed within the crystal and it is time for a new era to begin... and you will all be there."

"I don't understand!" Darien growled in frustration.

"What do you mean Crystal Tokyo is dead?!" Lita asked in disbelief.

"How can we be there? We're dead!" cried Raye.

"Are you alright?" asked Amy.

"Is it like what happened to the Moon?" Mina asked, her eyes wide.

As all of the questions were fired at her, Neo-Queen Serenity maintained her regal dignity, raising one hand gracefully for silence. "Please, we don't have long," she murmured, fighting Crystal Tokyo's strong pull. At the group's tense nods, Serenity quickly continued. "Soon, I will use the crystal to recreate life on the moon and the eight other planets. All those remaining on the Earth who have been healed by the crystal will be teleported to these planets... and you all will be revived and transported to the Moon..."

"We're going to be reborn?" Darien asked quickly as he glanced down at his small daughter who was in turn regarding her mother with large red eyes.

"No, my love, you will all be just as you are now... only living," Serenity amended with a smile. "The crystal cannot revive you in your aged forms, so you will be sent as you were in Tokyo, and Reenie at the age when she visited us at that time..."

"Will you be coming with us, Mommy?" Reenie asked with wide eyes that were rapidly filling with tears.

Instantly the calm faÃ§ade left Serenity's features as tears pooled in her own large blue eyes. "I'm sorry Reenie, but I won't be able to go with you all," she whispered as her friends realized the full implications of her words, their hands rising to their mouths in horror as tears dripped down their faces -- even Michiru and Haruka cried for their queen.

"This will kill you, won't it Mommy?" Reenie asked solemnly, the tales of sacrifice that Queen Serenity, her mommy's mommy who stood back from the others and watched her with teary eyes, had made coming to mind.

"Yes, my baby, I will die," Serenity whispered as she gathered Reenie into her arms, Darien wrapping his own arms tightly around them both. "But it will be alright for Daddy and the Sailor Scouts will be with you!"

"But I want you, Mommy!" Reenie sobbed, breaking the hearts of all gathered.

"Small Lady, please let me finish," Serenity asked in a gentle voice that brooked no argument.

"Yes, Mommy," Reenie answered automatically as she clung to her mother tightly, knowing that soon she wouldn't have this simple luxury.

Nodding her head, Serenity met the eyes of all gathered. "The only thing that you will remember of this time is that the Earth was destroyed and the enemy was defeated. On the Moon, peace will reign once again and you, my darling Reenie," Serenity said, staring into

her daughter's teary eyes, "will be raised by your Daddy and the other Scouts, who will each have a beautiful daughter of their own to raise," she continued, ignoring her friends' shocked glances. "When you are of age, you will become Queen and rule wisely over all, the Scouts' daughters becoming your own court," she said, her soft words mesmerizing all by tales of their future. "There will be many years of peace, during which time you, my daughter, will have your own little girl, and your Scouts as well. Only during your daughter's reign and after you will have been made a grandmother will the evil be released once again," Serenity finished, breaking the spell that she had bound them with.

"How do you know all of this?" Amy finally asked, her eyes wide.

Sighing, Neo-Queen Serenity placed Reenie down, her small feet quickly covered in the thick mist up to her knees, and called her mother forward. "Because this is the way that it has always been and the way it will always be," Serenity answered. "This, as you all know, is Queen Serenity of the Silver Millennium, my mother and Reenie's grandmother." At all of this, the group nodded. "But she is also Reenie's future daughter," Serenity added with a small smile.

Instantly, everyone's mouths dropped at this bombshell as they looked back and forth between the small princess and the past queen. "But how is that possible?" Darien asked weakly as he looked at his mother-in-law, who was now also his future grand-daughter.

"It is a never-ending cycle that we must all live, with many things constant. For example, you all will be reborn when I am and we will live again. Reenie will forever live a long life of peace, but without her mother or an eternal love. Queen Serenity will always live with the guidance of both parents but will have everything taken away at some point after my birth. And I... for the price of having an eternal love, you, Darien," Serenity murmured as she turned to stare at her love with her large blue eyes, eyes that held nothing but the love she cherished so much, "and you my friends, I will live forever without both my parents, a difficult life filled with fighting the evil and die young, leaving my husband with our child. There will always be a darkness to oppose the light, and while the darkness will never be fully destroyed, it can be defeated and the light will always prevail..."

As Neo-Queen Serenity's words died away, the group fell into a hushed silence. And then, the silence was broken as Raye strode forward and stood angrily before the taller queen. "Detransform, now!" she ordered, her voice cold and betraying her anger as the rest of the group slowly looked on in confusion, their minds too muddled with all of the knowledge they had just been granted. "If I'm stuck as a teenager then I want to see you as Meatball Head. And don't tell me you can't, because I know that you can!" Raye ordered, her voice growing even colder in her anger.

Sighing, Serenity slowly did as ordered and in a flash of bright light, her normal form melted away to the form that always stood within. With a shaky smile, Serena met the now-taller girl's angry frown, pushing down her pleated school uniform that she had worn for so long.

Shaking her head, Raye bit back the relief that she was feeling. Even though she was still the Raye that existed in Crystal Tokyo and had lived so many years with her friends, watching the changes, she still felt uneasy as a teenager before the mighty queen. Now, though, when Neo-Queen Serenity was just Serena the Meatball Head, Raye felt on equal ground. Angrily, she quickly raised her finger and jabbed it hard into Serena's chest, causing the shorter girl to stumble back in surprise. "Don't.. you.. even.. think.. of.. going.. through.. with.. this!" she ordered, each word punctuated by a sharp jab of the finger.

"Raye, stop it!" Serena cried as she held a hand to her aching chest, her eyes filling unconsciously with tears.

"No Serena, she's right!" Lita jumped in angrily as she stalked forward, shoving Raye aside till she now towered above the younger girl. "You cannot do this!"

Sighing, Serena focused on the calm confidence that she had gained since she had last worn this shell and slowly straightened her shoulders. "There is nothing that I can do about it. It's destiny!" she cried petulantly as she jutted out her chin stubbornly.

"Then change it Serena!" Darien nearly shouted as he pushed in front of Lita and took the smaller girl into his arms. Sighing, he breathed in her familiar scent as he clung to her dearly. "I don't want you to die, too.. not so that we all can live," he murmured, the words coming straight from his heart. "Change destiny and live without us. Rebuild the peace on Earth."

Fighting the tears that threatened to overwhelm her, Serena buried her head against Darien's strong shoulder and shook her head. Even though she wanted to do anything but, she then slowly backed away from her love, fighting the urge to stay hidden in his arms for eternity. "I cannot change destiny," she murmured as she turned and stared into Amy's dark and troubled eyes.

"Girl, there's so much work for you left to do on Earth!" Mina protested as she stepped forth, her eyes shining.

Sighing, Serena backed away from all till she was standing beside her mother. Till this point, the outer scouts had remained quiet, sad expressions on their faces. They would not interfere for they knew the sacrifices that must be made in order to ensure the success of a mission. Of that, Serena was certain. Also, Reenie had stayed quiet, her eyes locked on Serena's form. And then there was Amy...

"Serena, they are all right," Haruka broke in suddenly, causing Serena's blue eyes to widen in amazement.

"But, you out of all, should realize that everything must be sacrificed as long as the mission is fulfilled. _This_ is the mission," Serena cried out, her eyes boring into Haruka's softened expression.

"And you," Michiru broke in, her expression gentle, "should remember the lesson that you taught us both so long ago. 'It can't be true that there is no way to save this world without sacrificing someone innocent,'" she murmured, repeating Serena's words back to her, the

words that she had used so many years ago when she begged for Hotaru to come back and defeat Mistress 9.

With tears in her eyes, Serena furiously shook her head. "Why won't you listen to me?!" she cried, the wetness burning her eyes. "I.. can't.. stop.. this!!"

"Serena," Queen Serenity broke in quietly as she wrapped an arm around her daughter, "you must not use broken excuses so much as logical explanations." At her daughter's serious gaze, she knew that her daughter understood. "By transforming into Serena Tsukino, you have raised the gates for their protective urges. You must appeal to reason."

Sighing, Serena knew her mother was right. Determinedly, she moved forward through the mist till she was standing beside her silent friend. "Amy, you understand why I won't do as they ask.. why I can't?" Serena asked, her words causing everyone to turn and look at Amy in shock. Surely, Serena's childhood best friend would not urge her to sacrifice herself. If anything, Amy would only help their case.

As the tears built in Amy's soft blue eyes, she hugged her friend fiercely to her. "I don't want you to have to do this," she murmured as her friends drew near once again, "but I understand that you must."

"Amy?!" they all gasped in amazement as they glared at the young girl.

Shaking her head, Serena moved out of her embrace and smiled softly at her friend. "Please explain to them what we both know," she encouraged as she nodded towards their exasperated looks.

Nodding, Amy quickly wiped away her tears as Serena lifted Reenie into her arms. "The Earth is dying," she whispered, the tears pooling just as quickly. "Right before I.. died," Amy sighed, her voice faltering, "my computer showed me that because of all of the negative energy... the Earth's orbit had been altered."

Shaking their heads slowly, Mina and Raye quickly stepped to either side of Serena, just feeling comfort in her presence. "So... is that bad?" Mina asked, her voice cracking.

This time, Amy couldn't help the sob that escaped, causing all to immediately lose any hope that they carried for saving Serena from the fate that she wanted to impose upon herself. "If the Earth is left as it is, then everything will be thrown off balance... the ice caps will melt, the equator may very well freeze, and in the meantime... all life on Earth would die," she whispered. Closing her eyes against the truth, she quickly continued. "And even if Serena used the Imperium Silver Crystal to fix things on the Earth... it would still kill her," she sobbed as she quickly turned into Lita's arms, the taller girl trying to comfort her even as she tried to comfort herself.

"As you can see, there is no escaping destiny," Serena murmured sadly as Reenie quietly buried her head in her chest.

"Serena, I don't want you to go," Reenie murmured, causing an

involuntary sigh to escape her mother's lips. This change of form was confusing her daughter.

"I'm sorry everyone, but I must go..." Serena trailed off sadly as she slowly passed Reenie off to her father, tears brimming in her eyes once again. "It's time for me to say goodbye," she murmured as she felt the pull to her mortal life grow stronger.

Sobbing, Reenie buried her head in her daddy's shoulders as the anguish overwhelmed her. She didn't want to lose her mommy again. "How.. how can we live without you? We'll miss you so much!" Reenie cried.

At this, the tears quickly began to fall down Serena's own cheeks. "No you won't," she murmured as she hid her face in her hands, her own sobs wracking her small body, showing to all that this hurt the girl as much as it was hurting them all.. if not more so.

Fighting his own tears, Darien quickly passed Reenie off to Raye as he hurried forward and enclosed Serena in his arms. "We... we won't remember you, will we?" he asked, his voice hollow as he held her gently.

Gasping for breath, Serena rubbed her cheek against Darien's soft blazer, relishing in his scent, knowing that it would be a _long_time till she was able to smell his familiar scent again. "The only thing that you will remember of this time is that the Earth was destroyed and the enemy was defeated," Serena whispered, repeating her earlier words.

"You.. you can't take away our memories of you!!" Lita cried, her eyes blazing with anger.

"It is the best for you all," Serena responded as she once more stepped out of Darien's embrace -- too afraid that if she stayed she would never be able to leave. Turning, she met the shocked eyes of her friends.

"You can't make that decision for us!" Raye cried out, her anger growing once again.

Sighing, Serena quickly shook her head. "Even if I did want to leave you with your memories, the Imperium Silver Crystal wouldn't let me. There's nothing that I can do."

"We won't remember any of this either, will we? Of what you've told us?" Michiru asked, her eyes somber.

"No," was Serena's simple reply.

Biting her lip, Mina slowly thought over Serena's words. "You have to go, don't you?" she asked seriously, her eyes meeting Serena's bright blue ones. "And finish it?" At her nod, Mina quickly stepped forward and enveloped her friend in a large hug. "But we'll be together again someday, right? We'll see you again?" she asked earnestly.

Smiling through her tears, Serena hugged her friend tightly. "We will.. I promise."

"You've been such a good friend Serena," Mina whispered fiercely, the

tears streaming down her face. "My life was great because of you."

Pulling away, Serena met Mina's direct gaze. "I know that you will take great care of Reenie and Darien. You were always my hero, Sailor V, and you have always lived up to that status," she murmured, her eyes glistening.

Smiling, Mina wiped away her tears as she stepped back to a respectful distance. "Thank you, and tell Artemis not to worry and that I will see him soon," she murmured, knowing that Serena's words were by far the nicest anyone had ever said to her before.

And then, it was Michiru's turn as the young woman stepped forward and hugged Serena tightly. "Thank you for teaching Haruka and I about love," she whispered, her soft words sincere.

Smiling, Serena hugged the older girl tightly. "You always had love in your heart, Michiru," she said, whispering into the woman's soft blue-green hair. "I just helped you to find it. Take care of Haruka and keep her out of trouble."

"I will.. I promise," Michiru whispered as she stepped away and allowed Haruka to take her place.

As Serena was enveloped in the older girl's firm hug, she remarked to herself how Haruka still seemed slightly masculine to her. "You have always held the spirit to fight... that I respect in you," Serena whispered.

Smiling, Haruka stepped back and nodded at the younger girl. She was always so cute and it was so fun when she was younger to torment her because of her initial thoughts that she was really a boy. "I will always keep Reenie safe," she promised, her eyes glassy. "Her innocence will never be sacrificed."

"I know you will, Haruka," Serena said quietly, her words true as Lita stepped forward and took Serena's hands gently into her own.

"I always wanted to protect you, my princess..." Lita whispered, her voice choked.

"And you always did," Serena murmured as she reached forward and hugged the taller girl.

"Thank you for always caring," Lita murmured as she stepped back.

"Always believe in yourself, Lita," Serena murmured, "for you always have and always will be special. You will guard my family well."

"Serena!" Amy sobbed as she stepped forward and wrapped her arms tightly around Serena's shoulders, the tears pouring down her face.

Surprised, Serena held the quiet girl lightly as she cried, so unlike her friend. "It will be alright Amy," she whispered, her voice light. "You have always been so bright and smart -- I know that you will

make life on the Moon a better place with your knowledge.. and your kindness," she murmured as she gave the blue-haired girl one final squeeze before Amy made room for the next Sailor Scout.

"Hey Meatball Head," Raye said quietly as she stepped forward, suddenly nervous before her friend. "I.. I'm..."

Ignoring her actions, Serena quickly darted forward and threw her arms around the raven-haired girl. "I know," Serena murmured. "I have always known. Please take good care of Darien and Reenie for me... it will be hard..."

"I will Serena. I promise," Raye whispered as her arms tightened. And she knew that she would. In no way in this future world would she endanger the love between the two. She knew that they were destined to be together and she knew that someday she would find her own love. And this time, she was doing this for herself.

And then, Reenie was stepping forward, very hesitantly. "Serena?" she asked, her voice so very tiny.

Shaking her head, Serena quickly transformed back into Neo-Queen Serenity. "My baby," she whispered as she knelt down and opened her arms to her daughter.

"Mommy!" Reenie sobbed as she ran forward and threw her arms around her shoulders. "Please don't leave me!"

"I'm sorry Reenie," Serenity whispered, the tears finally pooling once more as sadness filled her eyes, "but this is the way that it must be. But do not worry, my love, for you will be happy on the Moon... and I will always be there for you. I will always be watching over you," she vowed, her eyes glistening as the girl's tears trickled down. "Just look to the Earth and I will be there."

Nodding very slowly, she allowed her mommy to place her back on the ground. "Mommy, you were always my hero, and some day, I'm going to be just like you," she vowed.

Smiling brightly, Serenity reached forward and gently touched her daughter's cheek, still kneeling before her. "Reenie, you already shine brighter than I ever could," she whispered. "You truly are a Small Lady. Now, run to the Scouts," she murmured, gently ushering her daughter away.

With tears in her eyes once again, Reenie reached forward and kissed her mommy lightly on the cheek. "I love you Mommy, and tell Diana that I love her as well," she whispered before turning and running towards the waiting Scouts.

Smiling, Serenity slowly climbed to her feet and watched as Mina scooped the small girl into her arms. Turning, the Scouts stared back at their once and future queen and smiled brightly at her. "We _will_ see you again," Lita vowed, her voice firm.

"And you'll always be our Meatball Head!" Raye cried out.

"Trust me, we'll be pigging out again in no time at all!" Mina cried out.

"We'll have the treats ready and waiting for your return," Amy vowed with a small wave as the girls slowly turned and disappeared into the mist.

As soon as they were gone, Serenity detransformed and then turned to her eternal love. "Darien," Serena murmured with tearful eyes as she quickly moved into his embrace. Immediately, his arms tightened around her small frame as she sobbed into his chest, her arms wrapped tightly around his neck. "I love you so much," she murmured, never wanting to end this moment.

"Please, don't leave me," Darien whispered, his voice rough with pain. "Let me stay with you."

Shaking her head, Serena pulled back slightly to stare up into his proud face, his beautiful blue eyes filled with tears. "You have.."

"I.. I don't want to leave you here all alone," Darien interrupted, his voice choked as he pulled Serena close once again. In the end, despite all of Serena's brave words, he knew how much this was killing his love. She was being forced to say goodbye to all that she loved so that she could spend only God knows how many years, decades, centuries, or millenniums all alone. For a person with so much love and who had a heart as large as she did, that self-imposed isolation would be worse than any other hell she could be forced into. Serena deserved nothing but the best in life and the love and light that she was. "Let me stay with you... we'd be together..."

"No Darien, you can't," Serena whispered sadly, the tears streaking down her face as she stared up into his dark eyes. "Both of us can't leave Reenie. You must go with them and raise our daughter."

At Serena's words, Darien knew that she was right. Even though he wanted nothing more than to never leave Serena's side again, he also knew that he couldn't abandon his daughter. He never could say no to either Serena or Reenie.... they were his only weakness. "I will always love you," he whispered fiercely against her golden hair.

"And I will always be there for you, my love. I will always watch over you from the Earth.. I love you" Serena whispered as she slowly arched her head back even as Darien lowered his. And then, like it was scripted in a play, both brought their lips together in a way that radiated love, sorrow, and life -- sealing their eternal vow of love for one another. In that instant, their kiss radiated light as their forms slowly dissolved back and forth from Serena Tsukino and Darien Chiba to Neo-Queen Serenity and King Endymion, till finally stabilizing as Princess Serenity and Prince Endymion -- the eternal lovers bound in their eternal love.

"I'm sorry, Prince Endymion," Queen Serenity slowly whispered, knowing that she must break their final kiss before the separation they were about to endure, "but you must go."

Sighing, the Prince and Princess slowly broke apart, their eyes which shined their love for one another locked on the other. "I will always love you, my prince, my husband, my king," Princess Serenity murmured, her eyes filling with tears of love.

"And I you, my princess, my wife, and my queen," Prince Endymion whispered back before slowly stepping away, Serenity's hand clasped within his own as he stepped back before her soft touch finally faded away, the small hand drifting slowly back to her side.

"I love you!" she cried as the mist swallowed her eternal love, taking him from her side, but never from her heart.

"I'm sorry my daughter, but it is time," Queen Serenity whispered as she walked forth, her eyes shining with unshed tears.

Nodding mutely, Princess Serenity quickly wrapped her small arms around her mother before reaching up and kissing her on the cheek. "Thank you for everything, mother."

"I love you, Serena," Queen Serenity murmured back as she gently squeezed her daughter before backing away.

"Please don't be too hard on my daughter! Be a good princess!" Princess Serenity called out with a sad smile that twinkled with the slightest bit of mirth before the mist swallowed her mother once more, leaving her in solitude. Then, the tears that had threatened finally broke free. "I will forever be alone," the princess murmured sadly before the mist closed around her...

* * *

As the tears streaked down Neo-Queen Serenity's face, she slowly raised herself from the hard stone blocks that she rested on. Sighing, she looked around and quickly recognized her location as where the gardens had once rested... before the destruction. She had been right in assuming that the crystal monsters would soon move in to attack Crystal Tokyo after she and the others left, and by the ruins that surrounded her, she knew that her defenses had been futile. The Crystal Palace had been completely destroyed, now nothing more than ruins, while the buildings spread around.

Sighing, Serenity slowly turned and felt the tears fill her eyes once again. Lying around her were the bodies of her scouts and family, so lacking the exuberance and life that she had just seen within her friends in that misty place so shortly ago. And then, she noticed the others. Poor Artemis, the loyal advisor and friend was lying upon Venus' unmoving stomach, the tears pooled in his eyes, while his own daughter, Diana, was sobbing over Reenie's body, the tears matting her gray fur.

"Serena!"

Recognizing her own loyal advisor and guardian's voice, Serenity turned quickly, just in time to be mowed down by Luna, her dark eyes puffy with shed tears. "Luna," Serenity murmured as she cradled the cat in her arms, gently petting down the aging cat's fur.

"Oh Serena, we lost everyone else," Luna cried, so unlike her rigid self. "I was so afraid that I had lost you too! I don't know what I would have done if I had lost you too!"

Smiling softly, Serenity slowly climbed to her feet, only to stumble as her knees buckled from beneath her. Quickly, Sailor Saturn

appeared at her side and helped to steady the weak queen. "Thank you, Hotaru," Serenity murmured, her eyes kind.

"We were all worried that you weren't coming back," Hotaru murmured, her eyes lost and vacant as she met her queen's gaze, "except for Pluto, of course."

Nodding, Serenity turned and saw the sailor scout kneeling beside Reenie's still body. "Setsuna, please bring the other two," Serenity called. Instantly, Sailor Pluto nodded her head as she gently scooped Diana into her arms before moving to gather up Artemis. Quickly, father and daughter curled beside each other as they tried to comfort one another in their losses. As soon as they drew near, Serenity met the eyes of the small cats. "Artemis, Diana, both Mina and Reenie have asked for you to not worry and that they will be seeing both of you soon," she murmured, her smile soft even though it pained her to think that she would be unable to do the same.

At her words, everyone but Sailor Pluto looked at her in amazement. "Serena, we.. don't understand," Luna exclaimed, her eyes wide. "Oh, I hope the girl didn't hit her head," she murmured beneath her breath, causing a small smile to appear on the queen's lips.

"I have been visiting with the others and preparing them for their future," Serenity replied simply with a wink at the Guardian of Time. "But now, our time is short and we must finish this cycle."

"Serenity, what _are_ you talking about?" Artemis asked, his voice low even as he felt a newfound feeling of hope blossom within his chest at the Queen's words. Perhaps Mina wasn't lost to him forever.

"I'm afraid that there isn't time to explain," Serenity said sadly as she hugged Luna to her. "There never is for you four," she murmured as she nodded at the three kittens and Saturn's baffled expression. "Now we must end it before my resolve weakens. Hotaru, you must use your silence glaive and destroy this world," Serenity said as she indicated for Sailor Pluto to step beside her, the cats still cradled in her arms.

"**_WHAT?!_**" everyone cried out in surprise. They were all well aware of the fact that Sailor Saturn was very powerful in the fact that she, and she alone, was given the power to destroy entire worlds. None would ever know it, but that was the same thing that Queen Serenity had ordered of the scout back on the moon and was the reason that the Moon was incapable of life in this time. But not to worry, for she would reawaken it soon. They also were well aware of the fact that to use that power was suicide for the scout -- and that their queen had in fact just ordered the Scout's death.

"Hotaru," Neo-Queen Serenity whispered quietly as she stepped forward and placed a calm hand on the woman's shoulder, "please trust me. It is what must be done in order to ensure the future," she murmured, her eyes sad.

"But.. all of the people..." Hotaru cried, tears in her eyes. Her queen had given her an order, but this was one order that she didn't want to fulfill.

"I shall revive them all on the Moon and the other planets soon. Please Hotaru... fulfill your destiny," Serenity murmured, her eyes pleading.

Sighing softly, Hotaru nodded slowly as she stepped away from her friends. "For you, my queen, I will destroy our world," she murmured, tears dripping down her cheeks.

Smiling softly, Serenity nodded her head. "Thank you, Hotaru, for everything you have ever done for me and for your kindness. You will always be needed for your talents in the future and will serve my daughter well."

Puzzled yet strangely comforted by her queen's words, Saturn waited until Serenity had raised the crystal and formed a protective shield around the bodies of their friends and around the cats, Pluto, and herself. And then, she committed the most atrocious act on the planet. She destroyed the world. "Death Reborn Revolution!" Sailor Saturn called out as she raised her glaive of silence and buried its pointed tip into the planet that she so loved. Instantly, the power surged through her limbs and flowed through the glaive and into the Earth. Then, in a blinding flash of light that surrounded the planet, the Earth and Sailor Saturn became no more.

* * * * *

As the light disappeared, Serenity gently dropped the shield that she had formed around her friends. "What have we done?" Luna murmured as she took in the horrific sight. The life force of the Earth had been destroyed and in its wake was a cold world. The Earth looked as the moon with a dark bleakness that destroyed everything that had been living. The Earth was gone and left nothing but the pale stone crust of the Earth and the soft soot of the remains. Everything was in ruins.

"How.. how can we survive in this?" Luna asked, instantly knowing that the ozone layer as well as the atmosphere itself had been vaporized in Sailor Saturn's powerful blast. In the end, only the bodies of the scouts, including Saturn's, remained as testament to their beautiful world.

"We will be protected for a time," was Serenity's slow answer as she turned away from her feline guardians and met Sailor Pluto's sad eyes. "Thank you for everything, my friend. I know that you will be the only one left to remember everything. Please do your best to ensure that Reenie, Darien, and the Scouts live happy lives and don't have my memory to drag them down," she whispered, the tears in her eyes once again.

Nodding slowly, Sailor Pluto moved forward and clasped hands with the queen. "I will do everything in my power to fulfill your wish, my queen," she whispered before stepping back. "Now, it is time to fulfill your final act in destiny," she murmured before disappearing in a flash of light.

"Where did she go, Mommy?" Diana meowed quietly as she moved beside her astonished mother, tears glistening in her eyes.

"Sailor Pluto has returned to her post at the Gates of Time," Serenity answered for Luna as she turned back to the felines. Softly,

Serenity smiled down at them as she knelt before the cats. "Thank you for everything, Luna and Artemis. You both have served my mother well and then you have taught me everything that I needed to know. Please take care of Darien for me," she murmured with teary eyes before turning to the small gray kitten. "And just like your parents, you will serve my daughter well. Thank you in advance, Diana," she murmured before slowly straightening.

"Serena, what are you going to do?!" Luna cried, the tears already forming in her eyes as the memories of going through this exact thing with her mother came back to haunt her.

"What must be done," was Serenity's reply as she slowly raised the Imperium Silver Crystal above her.

"No, Serena please don't do it!" Luna screamed out, trying to dash forward, only to be stopped by Artemis and Diana. "No!" she sobbed as the girl that she had always loved slowly called on her remaining strength.

"Please, my crystal," Serenity murmured as the power began to be taken from her and stored in the crystal, "heal the moon and the eight other planets... take everyone there and allow happiness to reign once again." With her most heartfelt wish spoken aloud, the crystal did its part and served its master. But, with all of the crystal's own power used up to capture and imprison the negative energy within its glowing chambers, it had no choice but to rely on the very power and strength of Neo-Queen Serenity, the most powerful of them all, in order to fulfill her wish.

Slowly, a blinding light began to spread out from the crystal as it soared into the dark reaches of space itself and began healing the eight planets and the moon which had sat silent and dark for so many millenniums. Then, with the life forces of the planets restored, it began working on the other part of the queen's wish as the souls of all those who had perished that night began to be revived on the different planets, with only few memories intact -- including the lost souls of the healed crystal monsters from the Negamoon. And then, the powerful crystal worked its magic on the seven Sailor Soldiers that had perished this night, as well as the eternal king, the future queen, and the three guardians. As the light surrounded their bodies and encased them in colorful bubbles of life, breath once more entered their bodies as all wounds were healed and as their ages were brought back. And then, the bubbles of light slowly lifted the unconscious forms of the Queen's loved ones high up into the atmosphere until they disappeared from sight, on their way to their new home.

Then, with the wish granted, the crystal slowly disappeared from the hands of the queen, transported to the small princess and future queen who would next need its powers, leaving Neo-Queen Serenity all alone. Quietly, the queen slumped on the hard, gray stones of what was once Crystal Tokyo's beautiful gardens. Weak and dying, Serenity stared up into the cold night sky and rested her eyes on the bright moon that rotated around the Earth above her. With tears glistening in her eyes, she knew that her loved ones would be safe. "I... love you all....." Serenity murmured as she breathed her final breath as the great darkness claimed her.

Princess Serenity of the Silver Millennium and Moon Kingdom, Serena

Tsukino the carefree teenager of Tokyo, Sailor Moon the reluctant but spirited fighter for peace, and Neo-Queen Serenity of Crystal Tokyo, the once and future queen was dead, her still body the only testament to the past.

* * *

"...And so," Darien murmured as he tucked the soft pink comforter around Reenie's small shoulders, "the brave and beautiful Sailor Soldier, the eternal queen, destroyed the evil that lurked in her world and saved innocence for all time..."

"Daddy?" Reenie asked in between a small yawn as her eyes began to flutter shut.

"Yes, Reenie?" Darien asked his daughter with a small smile as Diana curled up in the small princess's arms, Mina, Amy, Raye, and Lita all quietly sneaking from the room with identical smiles. Where Darien came up with these stories, they would never know, but they all enjoyed them so much that they never missed out on the bedtime stories.

"When I grow up, I'm going to be just like the Eternal Queen," Reenie murmured with a small smile before sleep finally claimed her weary body.

Smiling softly, Darien bent over and brushed a kiss across his daughter's forehead. It had been a busy day filled with delegations with the other planets in what had been dubbed the Golden Millennium, and he had no doubt that his small daughter was exhausted. Shaking his head, he finished tucking the blankets around his daughter's small shoulders before slowly moving to stand beside Reenie's window in the palace.

The Moon gardens were beautiful this night, with the Earth casting its haunting glow over their small world.... the Earth.... how its dark orb captured his attention.. and his heart. As he gazed at the large, yet dead planet that they floated around, his heart ached with a need that he couldn't define. Something was missing from his busy and happy life, but what, he couldn't say. Their days were always full with laughter and fun as the Scouts and their husbands joined Reenie and he on picnics in the gardens, Reenie's favorite spot, with occasional visits to the Scouts' planets. Also, he knew that eight little ones were soon to join his young daughter, making their happiness even more complete. Still, something was missing from their happiness. It puzzled him. And always, his eyes returned to the Earth. Its haunting sight freezing him and filling him with a longing that he couldn't quite describe.

"Daddy?" Reenie whispered quietly.

Surprised, Darien turned quickly and found his small daughter by his side. "Hey, I thought that you were sleeping," he whispered with a smile as he scooped his small daughter into his arms. Instantly, both of their eyes turned to the planet that always captured their attention.

"Some day," Reenie said quietly, her eyes full of a mature and serious light, "when I'm bigger, I'm going to use the silver crystal to give life to the Earth," she whispered.

Turning, Darien regarded his serious daughter. "I think that's a wonderful idea," he whispered with a small smile as he reached forward and planted a soft kiss on his daughter's forehead. "I love you Reenie."

"I love you, Daddy," was the girl's instant reply as both sets of eyes once more turned to the dark Earth that they forever circled. One day, the planet would be healed and happy once again.

THE END

End
file.